**Outbreak of bird flu**

1487. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no precautionary measures were taken by the authorities for the recurrence of third H5N1 bird flu, timely;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the WHO warned for the outbreak well in advance;

(c) whether it is also a fact that culling operations were handled in such a way that compounded the risk of further spreading of this virus;

(d) why the effective ceiling of borders and immunization of birds were not done by Government; and

(e) the economic fall out of this outbreak on poultry industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) No, Sir.

(d) In order to check ingress of the disease from across the border, the Border Security Force was alerted. The concerned State Governments also took necessary steps to check the movement of poultry and poultry products from infected areas. Immunization is one of the options for control of Bird Flu, which needs to be exercised in circumstances that warrant such recourse. The basic policy of the Government is to control and contain the disease at source, i.e. at the level of the bird. Accordingly, the infection is being controlled by culling of poultry in and around infected areas.

(c) The poultry industry suffers economically on account of decline in the volumes and prices of poultry products. Losses are also sustained due to culling of poultry in and around infected areas.

**Automatic weather stations in Tamil Nadu**

1488. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that automatic weather stations under National Agriculture Development Programme could not be set up in some districts of Tamil Nadu even though it was proposed by Government;

(b) if so, the details of the reasons studied by Government for not being able to set up these stations; and

(c) the number of automatic weather stations established under the National Agriculture Development Programme in Tamil Nadu and financial implication for the last three years alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) RKVY scheme was launched in August, 2007. Fund under this scheme is allocated for the projects approved by the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) meeting, which is chaired by the Chief Secretary of the State concerned.